

Legal Aid ACT Family Practice

Our aim

Legal Aid ACT aims to improve people's access to the justice system through education, one-off legal advice and ongoing legal representation.

We offer free legal advice to people in the ACT and provide ongoing assistance and representation to people who cannot afford a private lawyer.

Legal Aid ACT
www.legalaidact.org.au
Phone: **1300 654 314**

The Family Practice of Legal Aid ACT provides:

- Legal assistance and representation in Family Law matters.
- Daily duty lawyer services at the Family Law Courts
- Assistance and representation in child protection matters in the Children's Court.

Common Family Law Matters

Common family law issues include:

- Deciding where children will live and, how often they will see each of their parents, after parents have separated.
- Dividing property and debt between you and your ex-partner.
- Breach of Family Court orders by one parent.
- Deciding whether one parent can move addresses with children.
- Having children returned.
- Problems with child support.

Duty Assistance

If you are appearing in court for a family law matter for the first time, and you have not organised legal representation, a duty lawyer may be available during court sittings to give information and advice.

This service is free of charge and is provided at the Federal Circuit Court and Family Court, from 10 to 3pm each weekday.

A duty lawyer may be able to:

- Provide legal advice, information and referrals in relation to family law.
- Help sort out property disputes after separation.
- Provide representation for urgent interim matters.

Family Law Court of Australia – Canberra
Nigel Bowen Commonwealth Law Courts
Cnr University Ave & Childers St Canberra
<http://www.familycourt.gov.au>
Phone: 1300 352 000

Applying for legal assistance

If you require ongoing legal assistance, you will need to apply for a grant of legal aid. Please see our website for further information.

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Legal Aid ACT Family Practice

Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) Conferences

FDR Conferences help people reach agreements about family law disputes without going to court.

FDR Conferences are organised by Legal Aid ACT and are held at our office at 2 Allsop Street Canberra City.

Why attend a FDR conference?

An FDR Conference is a useful way of settling disagreements about family matters. Advantages of attending a FDR Conference include:

- Talking about your matter informally with the other party.
- Reaching an agreement that may be more flexible than a court order.
- Identifying the issues and better understanding the other party's position.
- Avoiding the court process, which can be slow and stressful.
- Participating in the decision making process.

How long will it take?

An FDR Conference will typically take 3 hours.

Who will be at the conference?

- the person you have the dispute with
- each person's lawyer
- a chairperson who is an experienced family lawyer
- Child's Representative, if one has been appointed.

Children **are not** allowed to attend FDR conferences.

Family Advocacy and Support Services

The Family Advocacy and Support Service (FASS) is a free service providing assistance to families with family law matters who have been affected by family violence.

You are eligible for support from this service if:

- You are a family member who has experienced or claim to have experienced family violence in your relationship; and
- You need legal assistance with family law, child protection or family violence orders

A FASS social worker can help with:

- Safety planning and risk management
- Court support
- Providing referrals to relevant service providers such as for counselling or financial support.

FASS - Legal Aid ACT

www.legalaidact.org.au

Phone: **1300 654 314** or **(022) 6207 1874**

Email: FASS@legalaidact.org.au

Domestic Violence and Personal Protection Unit

Legal Aid helps people applying for or responding to Family Violence Orders and Personal Protection Orders through our Domestic Violence & Personal Protection Unit located at the Magistrates Court.

Legal Aid ACT

Domestic Violence and Personal Protection Unit
ACT Magistrates Court

9.00am-5.00pm Monday-Friday

www.legalaidact.org.au

Phone: **1300 654 314** or **(02) 6207 1874**